

Celebrating 25 years of Helping to Make DX Happen

# INDEXA



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Daily Information Session — 14.236 MHz @ 23:30z

## Adventure in Equatorial Guinea 2007 as 3C7Y

By Anselmo (Elmo) Coll, EA5BYP, Team 3C7Y

After a year of conversations with different Ministries of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to be able to carry out a ham radio DXpedition to this attractive African country, we were finally granted the callsign 3C7Y in August 2007.

The plan was to activate 3C with an expedition of various operators to take place in the Capital City, Malabo. In this way, the island of Bioko AF-010 would also be activated and, after five years without any ham radio activity in this country, many could obtain a "New One" in the DXCC and a new island in the IOTA.

With the early support of the Ham Radio Section of S. Vicente we began to plan our expedition. Initially we were only three—Vicente EA5YN, Luis EA5BRE and Elmo EA5BYP.

While visiting my good friend Fred, KH7Y, in Hawaii during the middle of April, 2007, I mentioned the need for a CW operator to go to Africa. Fred didn't think twice about it and decided to join the group. Now our group was complete, four operators fit our plans well for a good expedition.

Each operator had his own ham radio license in Equatorial Guinea, Luis



**Team 3C7Y: Vicente (EA5YN), Luis (EA5BRE), Fred (KH7Y) and Elmo (EA5BYP)**

3C7L, Vic 3C7V, Fred 3C7Y and me (Elmo) 3C7A.

The date for the expedition was set for the middle of October 2007, a time of year where the winter rains have disappeared. Yet the place to locate the "Shack" had not been defined. Therefore, we were surprised when the Ministry itself assigned us a place to carry out the expedition. I remembered that place from my 1998 DXpedition, but could not imagine its present condition. Had time

taken its toll? We would see it only when we arrived in Equatorial Guinea. However, the Ministry assured us that we would have at our disposal a 40m tower on which to install our antennas.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> Fred KH7Y arrived at Alicante, Spain and on the 5th we found ourselves at the Alicante Airport en route to Malabo via Madrid. We decided to use our backpacks to

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## Adventure in Equatorial Guinea 2007 as 3C7Y (con'd)

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carry as much on the plane as we could. Thus, we had a pair of transceivers, wire dipoles, coax, personal computers, etc. In this way we hoped we would save some money in shipping costs and at the same time assure ourselves of being able to put a station on the air in case of possible complications from delayed baggage.

We arrived at Malabo at 21:45 GMT the same day, Friday, October 5. Humidity was very high and, our debarkation from the plane was done in the middle of a torrential downpour. Representatives of the Communications Ministry were waiting for us with all the documentation necessary for our stay in Equatorial Guinea. All things seemed to be going well! After a long wait for our luggage, we were surprised to find out that our boxes with the amplifiers, filters, tools, etc. were not on the plane with us. This was a great disappointment since the next flight from Spain was not scheduled to arrive until Monday. That meant we would be at our destination three days without the most important part of our equipment.

On Saturday morning we went to the place they had arranged for us to mount the antennas and to set up our shack. Here we were again surprised since the place, a very humid warehouse with part of it almost in ruins, was difficult to get to from our lodging quarters. We had to set up our antennas under a constant rain that didn't let up until the DXpedition ended. This made out work outdoors very difficult.

After examining the place, Luis and Elmo began to set up the tri-band yagi for 10, 15 and 20m. Adapting to our equipment dilemma, our idea was to at least have a station constantly active until we got the rest of our equipment. At 07:42 GMT on October 6, Fred made the first call on 20m CW. The first station in our log was F2GC. At 17:59 GMT Luis started his calls on 20m SSB and



**Luis and Elmo take a short break from antenna installation which was made most unpleasant by persistent rains.**

YB0NFL was the first station to answer him. The pile-ups were enormous. The whole group participated in the great demand there was for this DXCC entity because of its inactivity in recent years.

We had managed to keep an active station right up until noon on Monday when the Ministry of Communications told us that our heavy equipment was finally at Customs at the airport. Vicente and Elmo—our experts on navigating the bureaucracy—were in charge of getting the equipment through customs. It took about three hours to complete all the police and customs formalities and finally, in the afternoon, all the material was at the Shack. Now all our team members had a happier face and we quickly began to set up three complete stations. From Tuesday on we had two and sometimes three stations in operation simultaneously.

We finished setting up the rest of the antennas, a rigid dipole for 40m, two elements for 17 and 12m, another tri-band yagi for 10, 15, 20m, and the 40 meter tower was used to hold the wire antennas for the lower bands.

Propagation was difficult throughout

our period of operation, even with Europe. We had constant QRN, and on some bands we barely had some openings, such as on 12m and 10m. Sometimes our signals disappeared completely due to electrical outages that sometimes lasted up to three hours. We were still able to take advantage of all the time we could be on the radio. We missed propagation with Asia on the lower bands, but, while on this trip, openings with

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**Elmo, EA5BYP, and other members of Team 3C7Y work the bands for hours on end to provide QSOs for the deserving.**

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the USA west coast were really good in the higher bands as well as in the lower bands. We managed to realize a total of 13,500 QSOs in CW, SSB and RTTY. The chores of being QSL manager were to be undertaken by me (Elmo), EA5BYP.

Our sleeping accommodations were 5Km away from our operating shack, and that was a major inconvenience in scheduling our operations. We were keenly aware that the trip to the resting shack during certain times of the night was not a safe one.

During the entire period of our operations, a technician designated by the Ministry of Communications was present on a daily basis to observe and report our transmissions to the Ministry. We are not sure what it was he reported, but apparently all was well.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of October, the last day of our DXpedition, we were surprised by a strong squall that brought down and destroyed some of our antennas. In the afternoon we concluded our expedition. At 19:05 GMT, Fred wrapped up the DXpedition log with his last contact on CW with JA8JO.

On the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> we picked

up and packed everything into our boxes. By the afternoon we were at the Malabo Airport en route to Spain.

Behind us were days of happiness and days of sadness. We were happy to be able to activate Equatorial Guinea after a period of relative inactivity, but we were unhappy that we could not respond with a 59(9) to all the deserving who called us.

We want to thank all the groups, Associations, and individuals who helped and supported this expedition. They are:

NCDXF, **INDEXA**, Colvin Grant ARRL, GDXF, EUDXF, Lynx DX Group, Clipperton DX, Magnolia DX Association, CDXC, Ocean Fone, URE, EA5AR-RCA, Nippon DX Association, Proyecto4, Unión de Radioaficionados de S.Vicente, JR2KDN, and W5BXX.

We also want to thank the Authorities of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea for permitting us to operate in their country. Lastly, thank you for all of your constant calls.

TNX es 73, Team 3C7Y

## A message to the membership from Gary Dixon. . .

Hello fellow INDEXA members—

The New Year has started off productive for us in many ways. A number of DXpeditions to rare and new DXCC entities have been active over the past few months and others are about to be on the air soon. INDEXA has been able to financially assist many of these because of your membership and contributions.

The latest information on propagation predictions are that the next Solar Cycle began in early January 2008. It looks like we are now on that positive climb to what is believed to be a very strong cycle which in turn leads to great propagation on the bands. DXing will only get better for a while.

Since our last newsletter in November 2007, INDEXA launched a totally revised web site with the ability for members to pay dues or make contributions on-line. We have also initiated a big drive to eliminate all paper copies of our newsletter so INDEXA's financial funds can be spent to support DXpeditions and not the paper or postal departments. This effort is beginning to show success as many members have converted to e-mail membership thus a nice savings for us.

Remember that our annual dues were increased this year to \$20.00 which was the first increase in about fifteen years. As announced last year, this newsletter will be the last paper edition at the current price. If someone insists on having a paper copy rather than one via e-mail the dues will be \$30.00. I encourage all members to switch to electronic membership since the cost is lower to you, and you will also receive the newsletter a few days quicker.

Fellow DXers, please take a look at our revised web site at [www.indexa.org](http://www.indexa.org) to see some of our activities for the past few months and pending DXpeditions we are support-

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ing. The new web site will allow you to support INDEXA with financial contributions using your credit card if you feel you can help.

Thanks again for your support for INDEXA. We all hope this year will be a great year for us DXers as we continue to add all time new and band countries to our DXCC totals.

Regards,

Gary Dixon, K4MQG  
INDEXA President

## Where have we been. . . Where are we going?

Your officers have been busy reviewing and responding to requests for financial assistance in the past several months. INDEXA was a sponsor for the following three recently completed DX operations:

Congo	TN6X & TN9Z	December, 2007
Palestine	E4/OM2DX	December, 2007
Guinea-Bissau	J5C	January, 2008

What's coming up? While the solar flux numbers don't yet reflect that the bands are "hot", DXpedition activity is cranking up. INDEXA has agreed to support the following DXpeditions coming up shortly:

Cocos Island	TI9K	February, 2008
Iraq	YI9PT	February, 2008
Ducie Island	VP6DX	March, 2008
Clipperton Island	TX5C	March, 2008
Rwanda	9X0R	March, 2008
San Andres	HK0	June, 2008

Now more than ever we need member support. Your officers recently completed a mailing campaign to over 900 ARRL affiliated clubs letting them know what INDEXA does for DXing. Encourage your DX friends to join INDEXA.

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### DX World Guide by Franz Langner, DJ9ZB

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